

THE PENNANCE OF JIM FIDDLER

By CHARLES FRANCIS BOURKE

THE Jungfrau was to sail at midnight, under orders for the Philippines, and the imminent departure was being celebrated by what the gruff old executive officer called a "wardroom wake," a ceremony necessarily accompanied by cracked ice and accessories, tons of tobacco-smoke, larking officers with visions of a long spell of "loading duty" ahead, the whole capped by public ship-knowledge of a lading most elaborate in view of a multitude of supplies packed within the transport's white walls. For the "peddlers of the Junkshop," as the service styled the big supply-ship, lived high when the gods smiled.

"Hope your ground-tackle will hold out, Barry. You're sure one artist at that box; we'll just keep you in commission this night. Give us another tune, son."

It was the executive officer himself who spoke, with a shade of anxiety that did not "jibe" with so ordinary a request.

Lieutenant "Billy" Barry (so-called to distinguish him from his cousin, the engineer officer of the same name and ship) swung round from the piano-player, broadly smiling.

"Say, I'm done, and away. Official duty to finish farewelling. Special service, see?" Barry grinned affably. "Finish farewelling—yes!" the executive snorted. "Special service that you'd chance a wind-up by farewelling to us. The Jungfrau may not be so attractive, but she's spiritual!"

The executive officer frowned portentously. "T'won't be the first time you've shaved it too close, and there are limits, sir. Going the pace don't pay, son—there's nothing in it."

The Jungfrau's surgeon, a dry old Scot, seized the momentary silence that ensued to remark: "He's as much like poor Fiddler as two green peas. Never can resist running ashore at the last moment—even in a mortal pest-hole like that Malay harbor, as Fiddler did last year."

The silence continued. The officers of the Jungfrau had all loved Fiddler, "nobody's enemy but his own," that old crowning anomaly of mankind, "a good fellow." And now?

Barry, the engineer officer, said soberly, flicking the ash from his cigar: "And to his own death!"

For Engineer Barry, above all others, (save, perhaps, his cousin, the light-hearted Lieutenant), had chummed with Fiddler since the early days at Annapolis.

Fiddler had been officer on this same transport—a big, white-sided, converted yacht she was really, utilized, for

the most part, as an "apparatus ship" on the Asiatic station, where she made harbors deadly with constructed contact mines, electrical bombs, submarine bells, and mysterious floating contrivances, just as she had been employed recently by the same old crew on the home station, before receiving orders for the East again.

In the meantime, Lieutenant Billy Barry was in the stern-sheets of the Jungfrau's cutter, shooting shoreward under the impulse of four oars. And Lieutenant Barry's face was gloomy.

He had caught the surgeon's mention of Fiddler's name as he left the wardroom, and that mention had recalled memories that saddened and sobered him, turning his thoughts to the gay, care-free friend who formerly had always shared his jaunts of pleasure and pain.

A cool wind came from the sea, and Barry pulled his coat about him, shivering.

The effervescence of the wardroom had passed, and that sorry comparison of the surgeon's between himself and Fiddler had brought his image clearly to mind, dismally visualizing on his mental retina his lost comrade—confound that Scotch doctor, anyhow!

The night was very still, with the crescent moon just making darkness visible. The sea-wind hummed low and mournful over the lapping of the waters, and the long, slow man-of-war's stroke as the four seamen rose and fell on the thudding oars. The stars above seemed cold, and the distant shore-lights took on a suspicious look. Barry shook himself angrily.

"Confound it! I'm getting foreboding mulligrubs, too. Get up more steam there men. We're not pleasure rowing—we're pressed for time."

"Way 'nough—back water hard!" the coxswain's sudden shout electrified the boat. "Jove, sir, we most ran down the buoy."

Barry recognized it as the big iron cask-buoy the Jungfrau had planted in the harbor for experimental purposes in connection with mysterious signaling apparatus and submarine bells. The incident rasped on his already tensed nerves.

"You're a blind fool!" "Shipmate ahoy! Go back! Go back, I say!"

The ghostly wall floated over the water from the buoy not twenty feet away, half-muffled, like the voice of a man drowning.

The officer heard and the crew, as they lay on their oars, while the cutter swung closer.

"Give heed, I say! Go back! I'm

dead Jim Fiddler!" The wall came to them again, weird, eerie.

Rising from the midst of the water, with the ghostly wall, came a weird green glow. The iron buoy, straining at its anchorage, took on the same sickly hue, which spread into the surrounding sea like a reflection of some central light.

"And I've my pittance now to pay," the wall grew in volume, coming faster and faster. The men sat petrified with fear in the cutter, her bows lifting in the wash from the great barrel on the edge of the sickly green hue. "Night by night I follow some good fellow like myself, joining glass by glass, and song by song with him. Oh, I'm weary, so weary of it all. But on I must go until I send some man back to duty!"

The grating cry was swamped again, even as the voice rose in pain, but the coxswain capped it with a yell of mortal terror, his own face green in the light.

"Mother of Hope," the stroke-oar whimpered. "This 'nough' man! 'Tis a dead banisher—gradivill! Back to the ship for our lives!"

His panic fear roused his mates. They struggled, rolling and falling, against each other in their haste to flee the place, and crying out:

Up to that moment Barry had stared, helpless to do anything. In his condition of mind his faculties had failed him. Imagination it might be—but the men had heard—and, as well may happen to the best of men in moments of great doubt and peril, his only feeling was one of bewilderment, incredulity, amazement. But as the cutter swung round, his senses rallied. What to the superstitious sailors was the cry of some sea-wraith became again to him a stricken cry for help from some fellow mortal.

With a passionate cry, he sprang up in the well, feeling the gawking stroke with a back-headed blow that keeled him over the thwart.

Even as he did so, the buoy swooped down upon him like a great black bat, and again the aura of green burst out of the water, illuminating the whole ugly bulk.

Barry glared, wild-eyed, at this mystery that mocked them—the buoy, the very green light—his brain whirling. For, as he looked, fascinated, all regardless of his own hazard standing in the plunging boat, from the green water something rose, as though lifted by some unseen power from the heart of the ocean.

Slowly the thing ascended the bulging buoy. It reached the top of the buoy, far out of the green fluid,

standing upright against the swaying iron sides of the boat without apparent support, it slowly and solemnly turned, as on a pivot, facing him—a tall, spare figure with arms that rose and fell with the lapping of the water around the buoy, with an odd, familiar posture.

The coxswain's eyes bulged with horror; there was a note of absolute conviction in his yell of terror.

"It is Lieutenant Fiddler!" he howled, and dropped on his knees, with hands uplifted as if to ward off some overpowering peril.

The ghostly wall rose once more in distinguishable angularity.

"Give heed! Go back! For my sake, Barry! B. B. O. Barry, B. B. O." Then there was a pause.

For an instant, as he faced the thing, Barry's brain still strove toward sanity; but that half-forgotten secret came out from out of the old days at Annapolis—only he and his cousin and Fiddler knew that. And the coxswain had seen!

Barry missed going overboard as he dropped, flung into the stern-sheets by the roll of the cutter and the savage tug of the four pan-stricken men at the oars. But the coxswain caught him and eased the fall, while the cutter, traveling faster than she had been rowed since she was built, made for the Jungfrau.

From that night forward Lieutenant Barry was a changed man on the transport Jungfrau.

In fact, he ceased to be Lieutenant "Billy" Barry at all. He was another man—as the worried executive officer put it—from keelson to truck, fore and aft, port and starboard.

More than once his engineer cousin approached him, looking guilty. But he, like all the others, failed to break through the barrier of reserve which Barry shed about the occurrences of that fateful night.

So the wardroom left him severely alone, to go his own sinful route of reformation, for Barry was in dead earnest.

While Barry remained simply a harmless "crank" in the wardroom and a martinet at duty, the high powers of the quarter-deck did not interfere; but when a transformation took place 'tween decks, the commander took a hand. And the "Old Man" was wrath.

For almost a week the transport Jungfrau had become a "nervous-ship." Whispers of spooks and spirits and bogoblins and wraiths were always in the air. Men shuddered at night duty and almost mutinied when sent aloft in the dark. In one daring expedition to a derelict at night (for the Jungfrau destroyed derelicts among her other

duties) a boat-crew had to be driven over the side. Another cutter outfit daily refused to visit a bell buoy adrift and mournfully toiling. They preferred iron and hardtack and water, and said so.

The surgeon finally went scouting, for nerves belonged to his department, and his report "broomed the truck," otherwise capped the climax, of the commander's wrath and worry.

The old man wasn't ruffling guest-ships, and he said so loudly.

"Tis miraculous," the doctor said, "though you'll find I've prognosticated our estimable lieutenant was no Socrates for brains. The smash was fated to come."

"Go on," said the commander sternly. His frown was the more humiliating because Barry had been his particular pet. "The lad's breaking down, you mean?" he asked.

The surgeon glared like a Cheshire cat, for he was a gray monkey for mischief.

"I'll just tell you. The superstition that's rife aboard ship is superinduced, as you may say. Artificial, in a way, like to a small turret riding in a big turret. I'm told sailors believe in spirits by natural preference and swallow 'em neat; but when I find that Lieutenant Barry has shut off the seamen's bottled beer—without complaint, which is miracle number one, and also discover visually that he preaches to the blessed crew—"

"What! Billy Barry?" the wardroom snaped.

"No other, gentlemen. In squads and groups and severally. And, furthermore, on my medical word, the lieutenant's preachments include ghosts—"

"Send for Lieutenant Barry instantly!" A junior jumped at the commander's tone.

The commander of the Jungfrau was not in the habit of standing on ceremony with the junior officers, and he

relieved his mind as soon as Barry appeared.

"What do you know about this ghost business on board my ship?" he growled. "They say you're in it and encourage it."

"Some of the men received a shock before we sailed, sir," Barry answered promptly. "I did myself."

"Well?" The commander's face was implacable. For a second Barry hesitated. But he remembered the boat's crew that had been with him and blurted out his experience at the buoy.

"That is what I heard, sir, and that is what has influenced the men, and myself as well."

In the dead silence the commander glanced at the surgeon, then turned his black brows upon the engineer.

The latter was condemned already as a known practical joker.

"I have wanted to tell Billy all along, sir," he said frankly. "It was the big electrical idea that I reported I was working on."

The commander smiled grimly.

"I got it nearly perfect, sir, when the Manila orders came, the telephone graph, I mean. We worked secretly, of course, and all the apparatus was in the big buoy, to be taken ashore bodily till we returned—sounding boards, magnets, horns, and all. But the wires were still connected. You know, sir, we intended to experiment talking from the buoys to passing ships by a sort of wireless telephone method. Of course Billy knew nothing about this. So I just talked to him myself. The sound would project twenty feet from the buoy, even then, when I was talking into the receiver in my quarters on the ship. That is all, sir, except that it was rather a sorry feat. I confess I counted some on scaring the crew, and maybe forcing Billy to come back to the ship. Of course I expected to explain after-

A titter ran round the officers.

"But I saw Jim Fiddler," Billy cried. "And the cox saw him."

"Too bad, sir," the engineer grinned, feeling easier. "I told cox to row close to the buoy. He was merely pretending to be scared."

"Send for that man," the commander growled.

The cox of Lieutenant Barry's boat did not feel easy in his mind. When the engineer questioned him, he stammered, shivered, and burst out:

"I did see Lieutenant Fiddler, sir; that's the truth! It was a warning to let 'em alone once they're dead. I saw him rise from the sea all in the green light with my two eyes—"

The engineer exploded. "Now I understand Barry's queer notion. That was the submarine electric light attached to the buoy, under water, and flares the moment the machine works so well, really."

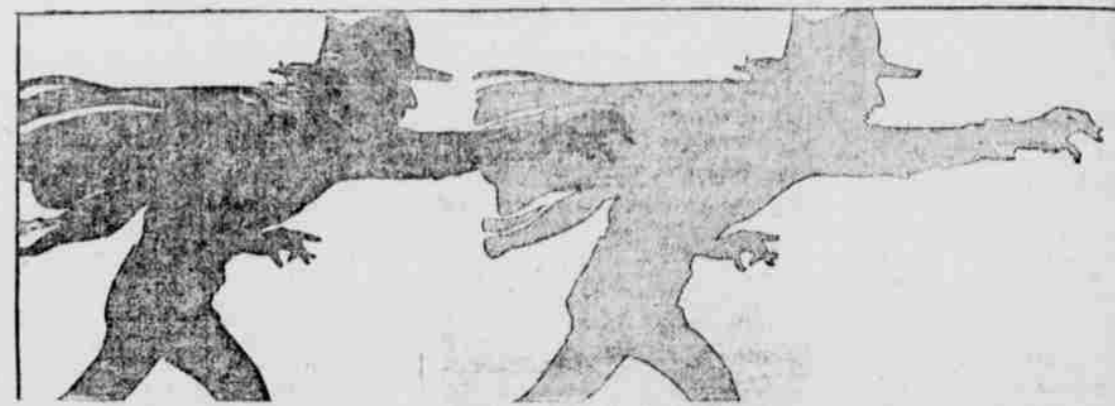
"Anything else you wish to know, Lieutenant Barry?" the commander asked quite sarcastically.

Barry had listened with stolid face. Taking the commander's question as a dismissal he bowed and went out without a word.

"He'll never believe you've explained the thing if you showed him a thousand devils' doughs from your bag of tricks, Mr. Wizard Barry," the doctor said dryly. "I know what it is—and that's where I get a rise out of you, sir."

"Twas reminiscent retina, because of his wrought-up nervous condition," the Scotch surgeon said. "If you know what that is. 'Tis a well-established phenomenon. As for that coxswain, he'd see anything!"

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ON A TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

(WRITTEN ESPECIALLY FOR THE TULSA SUNDAY WORLD)

(By Dan Ganey.)

ARIMA, Japan, July 4.—Today is the 4th of July in Japan and the 2nd of July in America. But then everything in this country is wrong aside, of course, and opposite to what it is in the domain of our Uncle Sam, which when all has been said, is at least, the best and grandest of countries. Americans are not without ways and manners, that are with some reason unfavorably noticed and harped upon by foreigners, but for all that, the name America peculiarly appeals to the people of the east. To say, I am an American citizen attracts attention everywhere and in some quarters stirs up envy and jealousy. On an Oriental the name America is suggestive of money, freedom and opportunity. From the highest to the lowest their eyes are directed toward our shores, not that they all wish to go there, but because they regard us as the most generous and benevolent of all people, always ready to help them in the hour of distress, and never yet taking advantage of their mistakes and helplessness to despoil them of territory. To us they turn their faces as the helianthus to the rising sun—ours is their beacon light, their star of hope, guiding them to the glories of a grander day.

In the eyes of these people, some of the virtues of the nation attach to every American who visits their shores. As a rule the common peo-

ple have more respect for an American than any other foreigner. It is claimed by those less favored, that this is because the American has more money and is the most liberal of all spenders. In any event, if you tell a rickshaw man, there are two foreigners, one an Englishman just across the street, the other an American six blocks away and both want to be at the depot within five minutes, he will at once start for the American, notwithstanding that he could have the English man at the depot before he could travel the distance required to reach the American. For some reason, both Chinese and Japanese servants prefer to work for an American in any and all capacities. All other classes of these people prefer Americans and are open and above board in displaying their preference. This is not rebuffed by the majority of resident English, whose swagger and conduct indicates that they regard themselves superior to all others of the white race. Many of these people were born here or came from near by British colonies, but they are more English than the English themselves. They cultivate the "flingish hawkcent" until their speech grates on one's nerves, as would the polishing of a back-tooth with a rat-file—they ape the waddle of his royal "evenness" turning up their "twosahs" because "that time it is raining in Lon-

don don't-cher-know. This class of his majesty's subjects and the average American citizen are at loggerheads before they meet; and when they do meet by accident each pretends to be unconscious of the others' presence.

Americans are known as far as they can be seen, and the familiar portion dress so they can be seen a mighty long way off. That's what our English lady cousins say, and certainly they should know, for apparently they do nothing else but observe us, for their comments upon American women are as minute and comprehensive as ever envious eyes supplied to a jealous hen. This antipathy of the two nationalities is not confined to visiting Americans and resident English but is very generally shared by the travelers of both nations. In all the hotels English people hold aloof from Americans and in other ways show a disposition to remain unfriendly. There are exceptions, but these are so few that they may well pass un-noticed.

Americans, brusque and independent in speech and conduct at home, are equally so abroad, which perhaps adds to the tension. They are out spoken in their belief, that there is very little worth being seriously considered, but what may be found in America. Everything presented to their notice is at once compared with something similar at home and usually to its disadvantage. In fact an American abroad is in such a hurry to see what there is in the confounded country, and get out of it, that his impatience becomes irritating to others. He sees all there is to be seen in the largest town in one day. Being in a hurry, he goes into any building, public or private having unguarded doors; breaks into any company without excuse or apology, on the theory, that if he is not as good as it, it must be because it is better. Should he meet a rebuff, the offending parties if English, are informed that he cares no more about the frills of dukes, dukes and other snobs, than he cares about the same class where he came from, the American hotel.

That it would cause him no inconvenience at all to purchase the entire effects and belongings of a colony of such people. The writer actually heard a n American use language of this character to some swells in the "Grand Hotel in Yokohama, and the beauty of the whole thing was that they and all others in the house knew he could make his boast good. Perhaps the fact that there is considerable substance behind what Americans say and do, has something

to do with this feeling, which is nothing more or less than envy and jealousy.

There is not a cooler around the open ports of Japan, so ignorant but what he knows the English and Americans meeting there, have but very little use for each other. Why this should be so he does not know, and in reality many of the people concerned do not know themselves. It is one of the strangest sights so far on my trip, that two peoples meeting in a strange land, both having the same language and closely allied by blood and customs, should with so little between them for discord, display such antipathy for each other. The writer is unconscious of being biased by the slightest racial prejudice, but he could not long remain so in a situation like this.

But perhaps all the trouble lies on the surface and the two peoples do not like each other because they are too much alike. Aside from travelers, Americans are not so numerous as the English in Japan. But this does not prevent them from celebrating their principal holidays on a more expensive and elaborate scale than any other foreign people. The 4th of July is such a day in Yokohama and Kobe; Americans come from all parts of the empire to take part in the ceremonies; to tell how we have the best government in the world.

In the meantime their brothers at home are shouting at the tops of their voices, it is so brutally misman-

aged by the servants they elected last year, that it produces the same evil conditions which have damned the worst. Evidently, Americans think differently in different places.

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